

The Marauder's Memories

by MsBrightside9

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Summary: A story of friendship and coming of age. Before tragedy hit them, before their lives fell apart they were just boys; stupid, reckless teenage boys—and this is their story. [Revamped story that follows the Marauders & Lily Evans through their years at Hogwarts]

1. The Letter

A/N: Well, here I am—almost two years after I originally published this story—with the sudden inspiration to keep on writing it. This both is and isn't a Jily fic. It is because of course there will be some Jily since we all know James Potter was a giant dork who fancied Lily Evans for years and I promise lots of interaction between the two. However this story will only go to the end of fifth year (I might write a sequel but don't hold me to that) so they will not be getting together in it. Along with the Marauders it will have Lily Evans (duh), Severus Snape, Marlene McKinnon, Mary McDonald, and a few OC's to flesh out the Gryffindor house. No Mary Sue's, I promise you that because for the most part this story is about our beloved boys. Also quick note about this chapter—it's a bit of a preface or a prologue, the rest will all be considerably longer. Especially the new ones.

Disclaimer: Sadly I am not, and never will be JK Rowling. This story and all of the characters, places and (some of) the events in it belong to her. So yeah, don't sue me, I can't afford that.

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<p>Chapter 1: The Letter</p>

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<p>The first day of September in London was an extremely hot one and everywhere you looked people could be found fanning themselves with

pieces of paper and wiping sweat from their brows. Kings Cross Station itself was filled to the brim with overheated, grim looking travelers but through the crowd that moved lethargically came a young boy with jet black hair that stuck out in every direction and an excited grin that was quite the contrast to all the other passengers. A couple trailed a few feet behind the excited boy who pushed a trolley carrying more than a few bizarre items—one of which was an owl in a cage. The boy didn't seem perturbed in the least by the looks he got as he passed by, in fact it was almost as though he enjoyed the attention. However the passengers really only got a few good looks at the young boy and his bizarre luggage before he disappeared from sight and his father soon followed suit. The woman—his mother—however paused for a moment to pick up a letter from the ground before disappearing from sight with the rest of her family.<p>

****HOGWARTS SCHOOL of WITCHCRAFT and WIZARDRY****

Headmaster: Albus Dumbledore

(Order of Merlin, First Class, Grand Sorc., Chf. Warlock,
Supreme Mugwump, International Confed. of Wizards)

Dear Mr. Potter,

We are pleased to inform you that you have been accepted at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Please find enclosed a list of all necessary books and equipment.

Term begins on 1 September. We await your owl by no later than 31 July.

Yours sincerely,

Minerva McGonagall

Deputy Headmistress

It was September 1st, 1971 and James Potter had just stepped foot on the Hogwarts platform for the first time.

On September 1st, 1971 Lily Evans was still best friends with Severus Snape.

Sirius Black was resigning himself to seven years in Slytherin.

Remus Lupin felt alone.

Peter Pettigrew felt nervous.

James Potter felt exhilarated.

It was September 1st, 1971 and their story had only just begun.

2. First Impressions

_**A/N: **_Funnily enough this chapter's called first impressions,

which is exactly what I'm worried about. Like I said in the previous authors note, I began writing this story about two years ago and while this chapter is pretty good (in my completely unbiased opinion of course) it was written a long time ago and I certainly would like to think I've grown as a writer since then. So you know.. review and stuff but bare in mind there's a two year writing gap between chapter 3 (Regarding Remus) and chapter 4 (Halloween).

_Disclaimer: **_I don't own Harry Potter, all creds to JKR.**

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<p>Chapter 2: First Impressions**

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<p>"James"<p>

"James!"

"James wait up!"

"_James_â€"watch out!"

"Crap! Sorry!" James Potter barely had time to register his mother's warning before his trolley ran into an unsuspecting boy who tripped over his own trunk in an effort to get out of the way. James stopped in his tracks and looked down at the dark haired boy apprehensively, not to sure how he would react to getting run over. The boy in question didn't seem perturbed in the least and made no moves to stand up from where he'd been knocked over.

"You must be James?" The boy said way as a wide grin lit up his grey eyes.

"James Potter, how did you know?" James asked in mock surprise as he extended a hand to help the other boy to his feet.

"Lucky guess," The boy said, still grinning as he brushed the dirt from his dark robes.

"What's your name?"

"Sirius."

"Alright, well Sirius sorry again for knocking you over there," James grin was a sheepish one as his parents managed to catch up to him and his mother gave him a somewhat exasperated look.

"It's no problem, not exactly how I imagined meeting my first person from Hogwarts but I'll get over it." Sirius replied with a shrug.

"You're a first year to?" James hazel eyes lit up happily. Sirius nodded and opened his mouth to respond but any sound he made was cut off by the deafening whistle of the train.

"You boys had better get going, you don't want to miss the train." James' mother spoke quickly and pulled James into a tight hug which he accepted for a moment before slipping away looking more than a

little embarrassed.

"Alright, bye Mum, Dad. I'll write you." He said rather quickly as he hugged his father briefly before hopping onto the train behind Sirius, who James noted seemed quite happy to be getting away at last.

"We love you sweetie!" James' cheeks turned pink at his mother's voice.

"Love you too." He mumbled as he turned away from them to Sirius who was grinning broadly and seemed to be enjoying James' embarrassment.

"Do you wanna come find a seat with me, _sweetie_?" He asked, struggling to keep a straight face.

"Oh sod off."

"Hostile are we, sweetie?"

"You're a git."

"Do you kiss your mother with that mouth?"

"Oh shut up and lets find a compartment." James shoved past Sirius and began walking down the aisle of the train, ignoring the stifled sounds of his laughter as he followed closely behind. However, they quickly realized finding an empty compartment was going to be impossible seeing as most of them were filled already.

"What about this one?" James motioned towards a compartment whose only inhabitant was a small, red haired girl curled up against the window.

"I don't know.." Sirius eyed the girl slightly apprehensively, she didn't look happy, in fact he wouldn't be surprised if she was crying and he really didn't want to get roped into having to listen to some weepy girl.

"What are you afraid of talking to girls or something?" James asked, raising his eyebrows mockingly.

"Of course not," Sirius said defensively and immediately pushed past James to slide open the compartment door. "Do you mind if we sit here?" He asked, the girl didn't even bother to tear her gaze away from the window and instead gave a slight jerk of her head which James seemed to take as a yes seeing as he stepped into the compartment and plunked himself down on one of the seats. Sirius took the seat next to him.

"What's your name?" James asked the girl who didn't answer, and gave no indication that she'd even heard the question. James looked quizzically at Sirius who simply shrugged and mouthed 'Girls' with a baffled expression. James nodded in agreement and decided to change the topic to something more interesting.

"So do you like Quidditch?" He asked.

"Love it, me and my little brother play it all the time."

"Me too! Except I don't have any siblings so I just play it with my dad, it sucks that first years can't have their own brooms. I'm getting one and trying out right away next year." The boys soon became so immersed in their own conversation they didn't even notice as another dark, greasy haired boy slipped into the compartment and started talking to the girl, or at least James didn't notice until he heard something of interest.

"You'd better be in Slytherin" The boy was saying and James scrunched his nose up in distaste.

"Slytherin?!" James couldn't contain himself "Who wants to be in Slytherin? I think I'd leave, wouldn't you?" He turned to Sirius for support but the boy had a dark look on his face.

"I don't know... my whole family's been in Slytherin." Sirius replied gloomily.

"Blimey! And I thought you seemed alright!" James made no effort to keep the shock out of his voice.

Sirius simply grinned. "Maybe I'll break the tradition." His voice gained a hopeful quality to it. "Where are you going if you get the choice?"

James held up an invisible sword. "Gryffindor, 'where dwell the brave at heart', like my dad."

The greasy haired boy made a small, disparaging noise and James quickly bristled at him.

"Got a problem with that?"

The boy sneered at him "No, If you'd rather be brawny than brainy-"

"Where are you hoping to go seeing as you're neither?" Sirius interjected.

James and Sirius roared with laughter. The girl however sat up and glared at them, "Come on Severus, let's find a different compartment." The two stood up to leave.

"Ooooo..." James and Sirius imitated her lofty voice and James stuck his foot out in an attempt to trip the greasy haired boy as he left.

"See ya Snivellus!" Sirius called after them causing the pair to once again dissolve into laughter.

"Slytherins," James said disparagingly with a shake of his head when they'd finally stopped laughing.

"You don't have to tell me.. my family's full of them." Sirius scrunched up his face in distaste.

"Yeah what's up with that?" James asked as as he spread out across the now roomier compartment.

"Traditional pureblood family." Sirius groaned "The Noble and Most Ancient House of Black" his voice turned mockingly high and he rolled his stormy grey eyes. "They're crazy, the lot of them. I don't think I could survive seven years in Slytherin"

"Well let's hope you don't have to." James replied optimistically.

x

When the train rolled to a stop at Hogsmeade Station James and Sirius were sitting in a large pile of candy wrappers having eaten their way through almost everything that the trolley offered. James had begun to think this had been a bad idea considering the feast that surely awaited them at Hogwarts but Sirius seemed thrilled at the prospect of it.

"I can't wait till dessert, my cousins told me Hogwarts makes the best of everything from pastries to pudding," For the first time since James had met him "which admittedly had only been hours ago" Sirius was speaking about his family without any distaste in his voice, in fact he seemed quite excited that his cousins had deemed the food so good. "Their normal food is good to of course, apparently they have pretty much everything you could ever want at every meal!"

James grinned at his friend's enthusiasm and was about to open his mouth to respond when a great shadow loomed over the boys. "You first years?" James eyes widened as he took in the huge man with a shaggy beard a lantern bigger than James' head. "Well are ya?" The man repeated a little louder, as if thinking they hadn't heard him. Sirius nodded quickly.

"Who are you?" James asked, pulling himself up to his full "yet short" height.

The man chuckled in amusement and smiled down at the boys. "My name's Hagrid, I'm the groundskeeper. Now do ya wanna get ter the castle er not?"

"Course we do."

"Well follow me then." Hagrid replied as he turned away and started yelling over the crowd of students. "First years! First years o'er 'ere! Come on now, First years!" The crowd of older students parted easily for the huge man as he walked down the station with the first years trailing behind him. James and Sirius having recovered from their shock were now right behind the man and looking up at him with a sort of awe as he ushered the group of eleven year-olds away from the station. They followed him down a narrow path and most of the first years remained quiet as they concentrated on getting down the steep path in the dark.

James and Sirius snickered slightly as a small, chubby boy tripped and would have fallen down the rest of path if Hagrid hadn't picked him up like he weighed no more than a pillow. "Mind yer step," he warned as he set the now flustered boy back down on the ground and led the students around a bend where the path widened at the edge of a still, black lake lit by a fleet of little boats each equipped with a lantern.

Gasps filled the air as the students caught their first glimpse of their new home: situated atop a cliff was a castle with many turrets, its windows sparkled majestically against the night sky.

"Alright, yeh'll get a better look soon." Hagrid called, "Come on now, no more'n four to a boat."

James and Sirius raced towards the edge of the lake, James reached the boat first and clambered in with a wide grin. "I win," he announced as he grabbed the lantern from Sirius. They were soon joined by a sandy haired girl leading the chubby haired boy who's cheeks were still pink from the embarrassment of his fall.

"I'm Mary MacDonald." The girl said softly, her blue eyes fixed on the castle ahead as the boat began to move.

"P-Peter Pettigrew," The chubby boy managed to get out.

"James Potter," James replied with a grin, his hazel eyes flickered to Sirius who was too focused on staring at the black water to introduce himself. "And that's Sirius Black."

With that the boat fell into silence which wasn't broken until Sirius, with a wicked grin on his face pointed to the water below them excitedly. "Quick come look at this!" The three other students rushed to where he was seated but he was already moving towards the other side of the boat. "No it's over here now!" he cried and the three rushed to that side causing the boat to shift dangerously beneath them as Peter once again lost his balance and toppled head first into the lake.

He came up wide eyed and terrified "What is it? What's in the water?!" But Sirius was too busy howling in laughter to respond. James joined in quickly as he realized the whole thing had been a joke, Mary seemed exasperated with the two of them and Peter, soaking wet as Hagrid pulled him from the water and plopped him down in the boat, looked as though he'd seen a ghost.

"Oh cheer up Petey! It was a joke." Sirius said cheerfully and slapped the smaller boy on the back encouragingly.

"Think of the bright side: you're soaking wet and everyone's going to be looking at you now." James added brightly.

Peter gulped as if that was the last thing in the world he would want.

x

"Thank you Hagrid, I can take it from here," The doors of the castle had opened to reveal a dark haired witch dressed in emerald robes, wearing a stern expression as she surveyed the new students through almost cat-like eyes. The students filed into the Entrance Hall with varying degrees of awe on their faces as they took in the impossibly high ceilings and giant marble staircase, any whisperings caused by these sights were quickly halted by a stern look from the witch.

"Welcome to Hogwarts, I am Professor McGonagall." The witch said "In

a few moments I shall lead you through those doors" She pointed to a set of doors so large they rivaled the entrance to the castle. "And you will be Sorted into your houses. While at Hogwarts these houses will be like your family-

"God I hope not," Sirius whispered quietly enough so only James could hear.

"- you will have class with your house, eat with your house and spend your free time in your house common room. For those of you who do not know, the four houses are Gryffindor," James beamed brightly "Ravenclaw, Hufflepuff and Slytherin," Sirius gulped nervously. "Your triumphs will earn points for your house while any rule breaking will lose you points. At the end of the year the house with the most points will be awarded the house cup, a great honor. I hope each of you will be an asset to whatever house you join." She paused for a moment to allow her words to sink in.

"Any questions?" The room remained silent but for the nervous shuffling of feet.

"Splendid, now if you will follow me.. your houses await you." With that she turned on her heel and strode towards the doors which swung open for her.

The Great Hall was lit by hundreds and hundreds of candles that all seemed to be floating in mid-air, there were four long tables filled with students whose heads all turned to watch as Professor McGonagall lead the first year students down the middle of the hall and up to the podium. She stopped when she reached a stool with a worn hat sitting atop it.

"Now when I call your name, you will come forward and be sorted into your new house." She announced to the students, some of whom were looking rather bewildered. "Abbott, Jeremy." The first name rang through the silence in the hall and a dark haired, nervous looking boy took a seat on the stool and had the hat placed on his head. Hardly a second later a second passed before the hat made it's decision.

"HUFFLEPUFF" It roared and the table to the right of the students erupted in cheers.

As the names were read of the list James found himself losing patience with the whole thing and it wasn't until he heard "Black, Sirius" that his attention snapped back to the sorting ceremony. James gave an extremely nervous looking Sirius an encouragingly smile which he returned halfheartedly as he made his way up to the stool and sat down. James crossed his fingers tightly.

Ahh another Black, I've seen many of you before.

Sirius cringed and shut his eyes Please no, I'm not like the rest of them

No you're not, that's quite plain here.

Gryffindor, please put me in Gryffindor

_Ahh Gryffindor, you would do well thereâ€"brave and reckless you

are._

Not Slytherin, please anything but Slytherin

You're quite right, Slytherin doesn't fit you in the least.

Sirius' eyes shot open hopefully

"GRYFFINDOR!" The hat roared and the entire hall fell into an awkward silence. The Slytherins looked murderous, the Gryffindors looked shocked and bewildered while everyone else didn't seem to know what to think.

"Oh thank Merlin I'm not stuck with my family," Sirius exclaimed a little louder than he meant to. For a moment the entire hall seemed to become even quieter and Sirius had a terrible thought that maybe, maybe the Gryffindors wouldn't want a Black in their midst. But then the table in question erupted into roars of laughter and sprung from their seats as the dark haired boy ran down to join them. But not before stopping to high five a boy with messy black hair and an unabashed grin.

* * *

><p>AN: **_Reviews are (metaphorical) cookies.

xx Audrey

3. Regarding Remus

_**Disclaimer: **_I don't own Harry Potter.

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><p>Chapter 3: Regarding Remus_

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><p>Remus didn't seem to fit the picture of a typical Gryffindor first year and that was, perhaps how he managed to go so long without being noticed. This was precisely the way Remus wanted things to be, after all when no one noticed you when you were there they definitely wouldn't notice you when you weren't there. Yes going unnoticed suited Remus completely fine. Or so he liked to tell himself.

Truthfully it was hard to watch the other students growing closer and forming fast friendships while he remained completely and utterly alone. And though he didn't like to admit it, it had stung when no one had noticed his absence that first month, when he hadn't gotten to use one of his carefully compiled excuses. Really it was a foolish thing to dwell on, Remus knew that. Of course he hadn't really expected to make friends at Hogwarts, he'd known he would have to stay away from the spotlight, but he'd gone his whole life without friends so he thought it would be a simple thing to do. He was wrong. Being friendless and locked away was one thing, being friendless and surrounded by people who ignored you was a completely different thing, and it was much, much harder than he had ever imagined.

Of course maybe he was being a little dramatic, it wasn't like he was _completely _unnoticed. His dorm mates noticed him, they knew his name, or at least they did most of the time. Sirius always called him a variety of different things from Reagan to Lypan. That was when he spoke to him at all, mostly Remus tried to stay away from his roommates. They were loud, outgoing and already, in their first month of school the center of attention half the time - or at least James and Sirius were. The other boy, Peter just seemed to follow the other two around and to Remus' surprise James and Sirius didn't seem perturbed in the least by this. In fact it was quite the contrary, they seemed to genuinely enjoy the chubby boys company, although maybe that was only because he provided an adoring audience for their endless antics.

Either way, those boys were definitely not the type he could be friends Remus knew without a doubt. However, the Gryffindor dormitory wasn't made up of just those four boys Adam Fawley was someone Remus could actually see himself being friends withâ€"although he was to nice to say it, Remus got the impression that he too found James and Sirius immature. But Remus was too shy to approach Adam who was always accompanied by their sixth roommate, Terrance McMillanâ€"the two had apparently been friends since long before school started. As it was Remus was a little intimidated by all the people around him and so far the only person he ever really spoke to was Lily Evans.

"Boo!" A voice interrupted Remus' thoughts and he let out a shriek of surprise and jumped off his bed. There, standing with a pillowcase over his head with two shabby eyeholes cut in it and peering through the curtains of the four poster bed was another boy.

"What the heck was that?" Remus demanded, his posture relaxing slightly as he recognized the grey eyes that belonged to Sirius Black beneath the white material.

"That, my dear Rufus, was my magnificent imitation of a ghost," Sirius announced happily as he tugged off the pillowcase and let it fall to the floor.

"I would hardly call a pillowcase over your head magnificent," Remus replied. "I mean you could have at least used an entire sheet."

Sirius grinned "I could have... but I didn't think Peter would appreciate me cutting holes in his sheets."

Remus' mouth dropped open "That was Peter's pillowcase?!"

"Maybe," Remus opened his mouth to respond but Sirius cut him off. "That's beside the point really. The pillowcase worked just fine and has anyone ever told you that you scream like a little girl?" He asked, still grinning.

"I do not!"

"Do too, are you sure your name is even Ringo? I think it might be Rebecca." Sirius stated and flopped back on Remus' bed.

"My name isn't Ringo!"

"Aha! So you're admitting you're a girl!" Sirius jumped off the bed and pointed at Remus accusingly.

"No! My name is Remus!" Remus was beginning to lose patience but the other boy just seemed to be enjoying this.

"Remus? What kind of name is that?" Sirius looked puzzled.

"MY NAME!" Remus roared causing a startled Sirius to take a few steps back.

"Woah there," He said, holding his hands up in a surrendering gesture. "Alright, whatever you say Lypan"

Remus groaned and collapsed onto the bed with his head in his hands. "Err, Lypan?" Maybe, just maybe if he ignored the voice it would just go away, and leave him be. Was that too much to ask? Really they'd left him to complete silence for this first month of school so why was Sirius so intent on getting his attention now? In fact if he hadn't been so exasperated by the whole name situation a part of Remus might have even been a little bit happy that Sirius had even _thought_ to scare him, it was the most attention anyone had paid to him since he got here. Well, anyone besides the teachers who all watched him like hawks it was unnerving really, having them-

An insistent tapping on Remus' shoulder brought him out of his thoughts, that and the sound of Sirius voice. "Remus? Remus Lypan?" Remus groaned.

"My name isn't Lypan either." He grumbled almost inaudibly

"Sorry what was that?" The tapping had stopped.

Remus slowly brought his head out of his hands. "I said," He began, his blue eyes locking to the grey ones in a way that almost made serious shrink away "My name isn't Lypan either. It's Remus Lupin."

Sirius grinned sheepishly. "Oh, sorry."

"Don't be, it's not like anyone knows me."

"Hey don't be like that, it's just me. For the first week of school I thought James' last name was Porter. I'm horrible names. I'm sure you have loads of friends like.. erm, well... isn't there.." Sirius trailed off and frowned as the realization dawned on him that he had never seen Remus in the company of anyone at all really. Remus raised his eyebrows in a 'I told you so' expression but Sirius refused to be beat and just grinned brightly. "Well, it's only the first month, I'm sure you're going to make loads of friends."

Remus rolled his eyes at that "Yeah right. I'll make friends when Peter is observant enough to notice the holes in his pillowcase" He replied sarcastically.

"Don't be such a downer Lypan" Sirius replied brightly.

Remus groaned "My name isn't Lypan."

"Yes it is."

"No it isn't." Remus snapped

"Now you're just messing with me, Lypan."

"No I'm not, Black"

"Yes you are, Lypan."

"My name is Lupin!"

"No it isn't"

"Yes it is"

"No it isn't, Lupin's the name I kept calling you and Lypan's what you told me it really was."

"Are you serious?"

"Yes I am Sirius" Sirius replied with a broad grin

"You can't be serious.." Remus obviously didn't pick up on the joke.

"I most certainly am Sirius, would you like me to get my birth certificate to prove it?"

"What does that ha-" Remus rolled his eyes and whacked Sirius over the head with his pillow. "That is such a lame joke, I can't believe you used it."

"Hey I thought it was pretty clever." Sirius complained and rubbed the back of his head. "See this is why you have no friends, you're violent and you can't appreciate a great joke."

"It was a bad joke," Remus said defensively.

"Maybe," Sirius admitted "But you're still violent and friendless which is why I, being the lovely person I am have decided to help make you some friends." With that Sirius stood up and walked out of the dormitory.

"I don't want your help," Remus called after him

"To bad, Ringo." The voice was faint from the stairwell but nevertheless Remus groaned and flopped backwards onto his bed.

What had he gotten himself into?

x

Later that night Remus sat alone in the dorm room, reading through a book he'd taken out from the library. His peace and quiet was soon interrupted by the sound of footsteps coming up the stairway. Remus quickly shut off the light and dove under the covers with his eyes shut tight, silently praying that if he pretended to be asleep he wouldn't have to speak to his roommates.

"ARRGG!" There was a distinct thudding sound of a body hitting the ground mixed with the snickers of boys. "Geez, why is it so dark here?" Remus opened his eyes a tiny bit and saw it was James who had fallen and was now getting up.

"Probably because he's sleeping," Remus shut his eyes as Peter motioned towards him and the three boys turned to look at him.

"Ladies and gentlemen meet the only kid in the world who goes to a boarding school and still listens to their bedtime." That was definitely Sirius speaking and he could hear the other two laughing.

"There's no ladies here.."

"Now, now, James just because Petey here isn't the prettiest flower in the patch doesn't mean he isn't a lady."

"Hey!" Peter protested, shouting so loud Remus opened his eyes and for a second he thought Sirius had seen him, but he quickly went back to fake sleeping. "I'm no girl!" Peter was still defending himself.

"Of course you aren't..." It was James' voice now. "You're far too scared of girls to actually be one." Someoneâ€"probably Siriusâ€"snickered and Remus could just imagine Peter sticking his lower lip out in a pout.

"Oh come on Petey we're just messing with you."

"Yeah we don't actually think you're a girl."

"Despite the overwhelming evidence."

"Shut up, Sirius. You git." That was definitely James. Surprisingly Sirius did as he was told and they fell into silence, Remus assumed they must have been getting into bed because the room went black once again and he started to drift off to sleep.

"Hey! Why are there holes in my pillow case?" Peter yelled, pulling Remus out of his sleepy state.

Sirius chuckled

"I guess it's time for you to make some friends now Ringo."

x

Transfiguration was one of Remus' favourite classes, well if he was being honest he liked pretty much every class. Having thought he would never even be allowed to come to the school Remus had a completely different level of appreciation towards all the teachers and subjects than his fellow classmates had. But still there was something about Transfiguration that enthralled Remus, it probably had something to do with his own, monthly transformation but he didn't like to dwell on that too much.

Right now Remus was keeping his head down at the back of the class

and taking notes furiously as Professor McGonagall spoke, but paying attention to her was getting harder and harder as he could feel someone repeatedly throwing things at the back of his head. Finally when a rather large piece of paper hit him in the back of the head he was just about to tell the thrower to buzz off when writing on the page caught his eye and he couldn't help but open it.

Could you stop taking notes for a second? I don't think I can be friends with a nerd.

Remus scowled and looked over his shoulder at a grinning Sirius Black and James Potter. It was pretty evident from his run in with Sirius last night which one of them had written the note. He turned back to face the front and scribbled a response.

Whoever said we were friends, Black?

It seemed like only a second later that he got a response.

James did.

Remus rolled his eyes.

Well you can tell James that we most certainly are not friends.

He could hear one of the boys snickering as they read his response. A moment later he felt a tap on his shoulder.

You wound me, Ringo. How can you treat me like this after all I've done for you?

Remus couldn't help but laugh at the response but quickly covered it with a cough as Professor McGonagall raised her eyebrows at him.

What have you done for me besides consistently get my name wrong?

The reply was almost instantaneous.

If you must know, me and James searched the entire school for a friend for you.

The handwriting changed to what Remus assumed was James'.

But we couldn't find anyone desperate enough so me, being the generous soul I am told Sirius here that we would just have take the curse and do it ourselves.

The handwriting changed back.

And so, consider yourself no longer 'Loner Lupin' Also you might want to look up right about now because Minnie's probably figured out this isn't a note on her class.

Remus' head snapped up and sure enough Professor McGonagall was heading down the aisle towards him with her hand outstretched. "Mr. Lupin, I'd like you to hand that over." Remus gulped and the boys behind him snickered as she snatched the paper off the desk, took one look at it and crumpled it. "Detention, tonight at 8:00pm sharp.

Potter, Black you can join him."

Sirius opened his mouth to protest but she cut him off.

"I'd know your abysmal writing anywhere, Mr. Black"

_x-

Remus pulled his cloak tight around him as he walked towards the hut on the edge of the Forbidden Forest, the early October wind bit bitterly at the exposed skin of his face and he was almost glad he'd soon be serving detention, sheltered by the trees. Almost, but not quite. Remus had never had a detention before and he certainly hadn't planned on getting one in the second week of school. He reached the gamekeeper's hut and stood outside shivering as he debated whether or not he should knock. After a few moments the cold won out and he clambered up the steps to the hut. A second after he knocked the door swung open to reveal Hagrid, his huge figure casting weird shadows as he ushered Remus inside.

"Hullo ther Remus, come on in. The o'her boys outta be ere soon"

Remus was thankful for the warmth of the hut as he stepped inside and took a seat on an empty chair awkwardly, not knowing what to say, or if he should say anything at all for that matter. He accepted the tea Hagrid offered him with a word of thanks and sipped it quietly.

"So yer the werewolf huh?" Remus choked on his tea at Hagrid's matter-of-fact tone. Of course all the teachers and staff knew, but none of them had ever been so forward about it.

"Sorry, didn't mean ta startle yeh," Hagrid apologized quickly, patting Remus on the back so hard the frail boy almost fell off his chair. "Just makin' conversation."

"Err it's fine sir, it's just no one really talks about it." Remus murmured.

"Don't call me sir, it's jus' Hagrid," He corrected swiftly and Remus nodded shakily. "Anyway, course they don't. Don't want nobody findin' out now do they? Makes sense. People get all jumpy 'bout those things for no reason. I reckon Dumbledore musta really stuck his neck out ter get you in school."

"Uhm, yeah he did." Remus replied awkwardly and was thankful when their conversation was interrupted by a knock on the door. Hagrid bustled over to it and opened it up. James and Sirius stepped inside with matching grins.

"Nice to see you again Hagrid-," James greeted cheerily.

"-it be nicer if it wasn't for detention though" Sirius mused.

"You don't reckon you could just let us stay here?"

"It's bloody cold out," Sirius pointed out. Hagrid merely chuckled and shook his head.

"Sorry boys, ye know them rules. This one ain't to bad, we just need

ta find some unicorn hair for Slughorn, he reckons he's running low." Hagrid grabbed the lantern from the middle of his table and held the door open once again. "Come on."

James, Sirius and Remus filed outside of the cabin and followed closely behind Hagrid. Remus looked miserable as James and Sirius stood on either side of him, nudging and prodding him with questions of: "Are we friends yet?"

They weren't overly far into the woods when something caught Remus' eye. "What's that Hagrid?" He asked pointing towards the tree.

"Relax, it's just a tree Remus, the woods are full of them." James laughed

"Yeah it's the spiders you need to worry about-" Sirius grinned

"Well that and the vampires," James interjected.

"Right, and the centaurs, they can be nasty."

"Not as bad as the sphinx's"

"Wasn't there a dragon in here, James?"

"I reckon there was, ghosts too-"

"-and not friendly ones like in the castles."

"Maybe even some Inferi,"

"Don't forget about the werewolves," Remus stiffened as the other two boys howled into the night.

"Gits, it's not even a full moon," Remus said and stepped towards the tree. "And I was talking about what's on the tree." He plucked a few silver strings off the tree and turned back to James and Sirius who were looking slightly abashed.

"Whoops," James said sheepishly as Hagrid came walking back down the path towards them.

"Oh good ye've found some, shouldn't take us much longer to get the rest," Hagrid said as he took the unicorn hairs from Remus and turned to lead them down the path again. It didn't take them much longer to find a sufficient amount of unicorn hair and soon they were on their way back out of the forest with no incident; that was until Remus' keen ears picked up the sound of something moving, rather quickly towards them.

"What's that?" He asked, alarmed.

"What's what?" James asked, looking at Remus as though he was crazy.

"I hear something..."

"All I can hear are your attempts to scare us." Sirius remarked and

turned to continue walking down the path with James, and Hagrid a little ahead. Remus followed them apprehensively and tried to block out the noise.

"I think I just heard something too," Remus jumped a little at the sound of James' voice.

"What are you in on it to now? Is this payback for me dying you robes pi-ARRRRGH RUNN!" Sirius calm demeanor turned panicky as his eyes found the shape of a large, dark animal not far behind Remus, and running straight towards him.

Remus barely had time to turn around before the animal hit him and sent him flying across the ground, soon it was on top of him and pinning him to the ground. Remus was so terrified he almost didn't make out the sound of James and Sirius yelling various jinxes and hexes at the animal to no avail. The animal—which Remus had made out to be a large dog—opened it's mouth and bore down on Remus who prepared for the worst but was met by—instead of teeth—a wet tongue licking the side of his face.

"WHAT THE RUDDY HELL IS GOING ON BACK THERE? HEY, YOU TWO GEROFF HIM." The next thing Remus knew he'd struggled out from underneath the dog and Hagrid was standing a disheveled James and Sirius who seemed to have given up trying to hex the dog and instead climbed on and starting punching at the poor thing which was now looking quite confused as it slung over to hide behind Hagrid.

"What... in the name.. of Merlin just happened?" Remus happened.

"We saved you, from that, that, _thing_!" James exclaimed and pointed towards the now whimpering dog.

"Savin'? He didn't need savin' Fang ere just got a lil' o'erexcited in greetin' him," Hagrid patted the dog reassuringly and his great tail began to thump, surely destroying an plants that had the misfortune to be in its path.

"That's your pet?" Sirius asked in disbelief. Hagrid nodded. "Oh um, well sorry about that... we thought were were being heroic.. " He trailed off, for once looking a little embarrassed.

"S'nothing, just a little misunderstandin'," Hagrid replied and began to walk back towards the castle leaving Remus, James and Sirius to hurry to keep up with his long strides.

They walked in silence to the edge of the forest until Sirius leaned in to whisper in Remus' ear. "I reckon we're mates now."

"And what would make you believe that?" Remus raised his eyebrows.

"We survived a near death experience together!" Sirius exclaimed.

"Right.. except we were never actually in any danger." Remus pointed out.

"But we could have been!" James interjected, coming to the aide of his best mate.

"And if that were the case I would certainly be dead." Remus said.

"Geez, don't be such a pessimist, Ringo."

Remus groaned "With friends like you Black it'll be hard to be anything else."

* * *

><p>AN: **_Reviews are me (maybe) getting a snow day tomorrow so I can work on this story (and procrastinate my important work) some more.

xx Audrey

4. Halloween

_**Disclaimer: **_I do not own Harry Potter.

* * *

><p>Chapter 4: Halloween_

* * *

><p>Fall at Hogwarts was a beautiful sight to behold. The grounds went from a welcoming summer green to a mirage of different colours. The house elves changed the decor to match the warm reds, yellows and oranges of the outside and as the temperature dropped magical fires warmed nearly every room. Every year, as Halloween drew closer the school would awake one morning to find nearly every room decked out in pumpkins, wreaths and strings of multicolored leaves.<p>

It truly was a sight to behold. But the majesty of such a sight was lost on eleven year old boys. Eleven year old boys enjoyed simpler thingsâ€"things such as taking the mickey out of their friend when said friend screams rather girlishly after being snuck up upon.

"Did you see the look on his face?"

"Merlin, he jumped so high-"

"Nearly peed himself I reckon."

"I did not!" Peter protested and crossed his arms over his chestâ€"his cheeks still a faint, embarrassed pink.

"Did too," James argued.

"Did not!"

"Did-"

"While I hate to interrupt what I'm sure would have been an undeniably witty retortâ€"where exactly is it that we're going?" Remus asked from where he was on the ground helping Peter pick up the contents of his bookbag.

Sirius stuffed his hands in his pockets and watched the three other students. "Why so impatient, got somewhere better to be, huh?"

"Well, we do have that pile of transfiguration homework and-"

James let out a rather dramatic groan. "You did not just say homework was better than us."

Remus scowled and stood up, brushing the dirt off his robes. "At least with Transfiguration I know exactly what I'm getting into."

"But that's part of our charmâ€" James rocked excitedly on his heels, "â€"spontaneity and unexpected surprises."

"Yeah like you jumping out from behind a suit of armour," Peter grumbled.

"Classic." Sirius snorted.

"See?" James pointed at the dark haired boy. "He get's it, now come on before we change our minds about you too."

Sirius peeled himself off the wall he'd been leaning against and strolled down the hallway after James. Behind them, the two outcasts exchanged nervous glances before following. Although they had only been at school for just under two months, something of a social class was already starting to shape up within first years. James and Sirius were easily the most well known in their year whilst the other two were essentially invisible to anyone outside Gryffindorâ€"and even some within.

"You still didn't answer my question," Remus pointed out.

"And I'm not going too," James replied smoothly.

"Why not?" Peter piped up.

"Because we live to annoy you, Petey." Sirius grinned and ruffled the shorter boy's hair. Peter scowled and pushed his hand away.

"Sod off."

"Language." Sirius shook his head in mock disappointment.

James suddenly stopped walking and Sirius nearly ran into him. He opened his mouth to question the messy haired boy but James cut him off with a sharpâ€"yet excited; "Did you hear that?"

Sirius opened his mouth to respond with the expected 'hear what?' but the unspoken question was answered when a shrill, high pitched shriek with no distinguishable words or purpose rang out through the hallway. "What do you reckon that was?" Sirius asked.

"Dunno," James shrugged and then grinned. "Better go find out."

"Are you sure?" Peter asked nervously.

Sirius rolled his eyes. "Of course he's sure, ya' pratt."

"Maybe we ought to get a teacher-" Remus began when the shriek rang out again—"closer this time.

"Shoddy bunch of Gryffindors, you lot are," James said. He puffed out his chest and stuck his chin in the air. "_I'm_ going, you two go back and find a teacher if you're so scared. Coming, Sirius?"

Sirius grinned and pulled his wand out of his robes. "Right behind you, James."

The two dark haired boys started forwards, leaving Remus and Peter to exchange another set of nervous glances before they too embarked on what James seemed certain was a heroic mission. Said mission, however, was cut short when the source of the shrieks—"in the form of two first year witches"—rounded the corner gasping for breath and clutching a cloak over their heads as if to shield themselves from an unknown assailant.

Vienna Dearborn let out another shriek but this one dissolved into giggles as she collapsed against her friend. "Merlin, I thought we were never going to make it out of there," she gasped, brushing blonde hair out of her large blue eyes. She pulled at her Gryffindor necktie which was covered in a strange orange substance—"as was half of her golden hair.

The four boys watched the two witches with identical confused expressions.

"What happened to you two?" Sirius asked.

"Peeves," the other girl—"Marlene Mckinnon"—drawled. "Fair warning—he seems to find it entirely amusing to dump half rotten pumpkins on first year's heads." She gestured towards her own hair dark hair and olive skin which was peppered with a stringy, orange substance. "Not that we weren't laughing when it was that Snape git getting pelted," she added with a grin.

Vienna let out a high pitched giggle. "Oh you should have seen his face."

"I expect he'll actually have to take a shower now," Marlene's lips twitched upwards. "The horror."

James and Sirius both laughed appreciatively at this exchange, Peter joined in too with a high pitched snicker.

"I can't believe you two screamed like that over a little rotten pumpkin," James rolled his eyes and crossed his arms over his chest. Marlene was an old childhood friend of his and the only other first year he'd really known before coming to Hogwarts. But despite being close almost their entire lives, eleven year-olds were expected to act like members of the opposite sex were beneath them.

Marlene stuck her tongue out at him. "I'll have you know it was a lot of pumpkin—and Vienna did most of the screaming."

"Only because you barely got hit with any at all," the blonde

protested. Marlene opened her mouth presumably for a witty retort but Vienna wasn't done talking. "Anyways, we've got to go get this goo off us before supper." She linked arms with Marlene and began to steer her away. "See you then, yeah?"

"'Course." James reached up to ruffle his already messy hair.

Sirius stuffed his wand back in his pocket "Yup." He popped the 'p'.

"You too, Remus, and youâ€Pete." Marlene called over her shoulder before the two girls disappeared.

Remus looked a little shocked. Peter looked downright bewildered. "She knew my name," he said, mouth agape.

"Technically, she thought it was Pete."

"Sod off, Sirius, she knew my name."

James rolled his eyes. "'Course she did, you're friends with us, aren't you?" he pointed out with zero modesty whatsoever.

"Oh and what a pleasure it is to be," Remus deadpanned. In response James punched the skinnier boy playfully in the shoulder. Remus swatted at his glasses in response and James went into for another punch but the sandy-haired boy dodged it hurriedly. "Knock it off, James." Remus nodded towards the once empty corridor where a tall figure was approaching them.

"Here comes trouble," Sirius muttered.

"Trouble?" A pleasant female voice asked. "That's not a very nice thing to call your favourite cousin, Sirius." The witch stepped into the light and placed both her hands on her hips. "What do you have to say for yourself?"

"Sorry, Andy," Sirius grinned sheepishly up at the pretty dark haired witch who wore emerald undeniably Slytherin robes and a 'Head Girl' badge pinned to her chest. "Thought you might have been a teacher."

"Oh?" she arched a dark eyebrow. "And what were you four doing that warrants fear of a teacher?"

"Nothing."

"Mhm, funny, because I came down here to check out reports of a disturbance.. you wouldn't know anything about that would you?" She pressed.

"Honestly, it wasn't us." Remus spoke up and the suspicion seemed to drain from the witch's face.

"Of course she believes you," Sirius grumbled.

"It was Peeves," Remus continued, ignoring Sirius. "He's launching pumpkins at first year's heads, apparentlyâ€some witches in our year were just telling us about it."

"And where are these witches now?" Andromeda Black inquired.

"They went to go clean up I expectâ€"I could tell you who they are if you want to verify our story-"

Andromeda waved him off. "That won't be necessary. Rotten pumpkins are Peeves' favourite thing about Halloween." She paused and then chuckled. "Besides, I don't fancy facing your mother at Christmas dinner if I were to give you a detention."

"I don't fancy facing her at all," Sirius muttered.

Andromeda smiled kindly and leaned downwards to tilt his chin up. "Head up, champ. You're a Gryffindorâ€"you'll get through this." She gave him another smile and surveyed the hallway one last time before walking away.

"Get through what?" Peter piped up.

"Shut up, Peter," Sirius snapped, the smaller boy stepped backwards as if he had been slapped.

"_Sirius_." Remus chastised.

Sirius felt a string of guilt tug at his heart and he forced a grin. "Sorry Petey, you know how I get when I'm hungry." He slung an arm over the shorter boy's shoulder.

"We all do," Remus remarked and then ducked to dodge the playful punch thrown his way.

"C'mon guys, the best food's in the kitchens right now," called James who was already walking away. "We can knick the good stuff before dinner's served."

"The kitchens?" Peter marveled. "That's where we're going?" He stared at the two dark haired boys. "How do you two know how to get in there?"

"We have our ways," Sirius smiled mysteriously.

Remus snorted. "Ways like begging Gideon and Fabian Prewett to tell you."

"That's one of them, yes." Sirius replied, unabashed as always.

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"What are you doing?" Sirius asked when he and James walked into the dormitory that evening.

Remus was sitting on the floor with his legs crossed neatly beneath him as he made a good show of neatly folding his clothes and placing them inside a small trunk that was nothing compared to his school one. "I'm packing," he replied blithely without looking up from his work.

"I picked up on that yesâ€"I'm not thick-"

"_Well_" James began as he jumped onto his own bed.

"Oh sod off, James." Sirius walked over to Remus and knocked the lid of his trunk shut with his foot. "Why are you packing?"

"I'm going home tomorrow."

"What?!" Sirius and James chorused.

"You're leavingâ€"you can't leave!"

"I'm only going home for a few days."

"You can't leaveâ€"it's Halloween in two days," James protested. "All the best pranks happen on Halloween."

"Wouldn't the best pranks happen on April Fool's Day?" Remus asked mildly.

"No, all those pranks are amateur and predictable," Sirius replied, James nodded at this.

"And yours aren't?"

"Sod-"

"Stop deflecting," James cut Sirius off and jumped up from his bed. "Why are you going home?"

"To visit my mum." Remus finished folding his things and placed them neatly in the trunk.

"Why?"

"Because she's ill." This voice, however, did not belong to Remus Lupin and came from the bathroom doorway where the fifth occupant of the first years dormitory had appeared. Adam Fawley was a lanky, black wizard with dark, curly hair cropped short and kind, brown eyes. When the inquisitive gaze of his three other roommates landed on him, Adam shrugged. "What? He went to visit her last month." Adam made his way from the bathroom towards the door. "Don't either of you pay attention?"

"No, they do not." Remus answered for him.

"Yes we do," James protested. "Which is why I didn't think you would be visiting her again so soon." (More concerned now) "Is she okay?"

Suddenly Remus turned very pink and turned away, his blue eyes fixed to the ground. "Yesâ€"er, wellâ€"she will be.. at any rate." Sirius and James exchanged inquisitive glances but Remus was saved further explanation when another roommate joined them.

"Why's Remus' trunk out?" Peter asked.

"I'm packing."

"I can see thatâ€"why?"

"I'm going home."

"Wh-"

Adam sighed. "Alright, I can't stand another round of this, I'm out." He headed for the stairs. "Have either of you seen Terry?" he asked, regarding their final roommate.

"He was in the common room playing Wizard's Chess with Evans when I came up," Peter replied.

"Evans plays Wizard's Chess?" James asked suddenly.

"Not really, but she's mugglebornâ€"she thinks the pieces are neat." Adam explained. "Why?"

"No reason," James whistled happily. "Maybe I'll come down to the common room with you."

With that James left Sirius and Remus to explain the trunk to Peter and bounded down the stairs after Adam Fawley. It was still early and thus the common room was filled with students from every year. Many of the students were studying, but othersâ€"like Gideon and Fabian Prewett who seemed to have gotten hold of some prefects badge and were muttering incantations under their breathâ€"were horsing around.

Marlene Mckinnon sat on a rug in front of the fire painting her toe nails, behind her Vienna Dearborn was sitting in an armchair flicking idly through a magazine. Near them, but not close enough to appear as though they were actually interacting was another group of Gryffindor first years. Terrence McMillan, a small boy with freckles, messy brown hair and glasses too large for his face was playing Wizard's Chess with curly haired, black witch named Septima Vector. Lily Evans sat behind the chess board, her dark red hair tumbling over her shoulders and her green eyes lighting up every time a chess pieced moved.

"Haven't gotten used to magic yet, have ya', Evans?" James grinned broadly as he and Adam took a seat next to them on the floor.

Lily looked up from the board and scowled. "Potter," she greeted coolly. "Adam," this she said with a smile. In fact Lily Evans always seemed to be smiling, just never at James Potter. It was a fact that greatly annoyed him although he didn't have the faintest idea why. Everyone else in the school seemed to adore him and he couldn't understand why she preferred a slimy Slytherin's presence to his. "For your information," the smile slid off her face as she addressed James again. "I have gotten used to itâ€"I'm just enjoying the little things."

"Why would you want to enjoy the little things when you could enjoy bigger things?" James asked earnestly.

Lily let out a dramatic sigh that only an eleven year-old girl could summon up. "Because there's beauty in subtletyâ€"not that you would know anything about that." Beside her, Septima laughed but quickly covered it with a cough and went back to her game when James scowled in her direction.

"I can be subtle."

"I doubt you can even spell subtle."

"S-u-b-t-l-e. Subtleâ€"there!"

"That was a rhetorical statement, genius."

"Why would you say something rhetorically? Seems like a waste of a breath if you ask me."

"You'd know all about wasted breaths, Potter." She smiled sweetly. "And I was saying it to make a point."

"What point?"

"That you know nothing about subtlety."

"Is that a bad thing?"

"Maybe."

"What are we talking about again?"

Lily sighed. "Is your attention span really that short?"

"Only when I'm talking to boring girls like you."

Lily glared. "If I'm so boring why'd you bother coming over here, git?"

"Is your patience always this short?" James mimicked.

"Only when I'm talking to insufferable pratts like you."

"How do you hang around Snivellus all day, then?"

"Don't call him that!" This she said rather loudly and by doing so drew the attention of several other students in the vicinity. She lowered her voice sheepishly and glared at James. "Just leave him alone, why do you always have to be so mean to him?"

"He's a Slytherin." James shrugged as if that should answer everything. Lily huffed and stood up suddenly. "Where're you going?" James asked.

"To find better company."

"With who? I know for a fact Mary got a detention since she was late to Transfiguration and the only other girl in your dormitory is Katie Tanner who's a complete weirdo."

"Shut up, Potterâ€"she's sweet," Septima snapped. James ignored this and continued to look at Lily imploringly.

"The Giant Squid would be better company than you, Potter."

With that, she stormed up the stairs to the girls dormitory leaving James to wonder why he had bothered coming down to the common room in the first place.

-x-

Sirius had read the letter once, crumpled it into a ball and stabbed it clean through with his fork.

"Something wrong, mate?" James asked rather needlessly.

"No, everything's just bloody perfect."

"Why don't I believe that?"

"Maybe because he's a rubbish liar?" Peter suggested through a mouthful of pancakes.

"Bugger off, the two of you."

"Is the letter from your folks?" Remus asked quietly. Sirius jerked his head up and glared accusingly at James who looked bewildered. "Don't blame James," Remus continued. "He didn't say anything... it's just everyone knows about the Black family."

"Great," Sirius snarled, pulling the letter off his fork and using it to skewer an unsuspecting piece of bacon. "Just bloody brilliant."

"C'mon, mate, it can't be that bad.."

"It is." Sirius tore at the bacon. "In fact, why don't you just read the bloody thing and see for yourself?"

Tentatively, James reached forwards and smoothed out the letter. Over his shoulders, Remus and Peter began to read as well.

Dear Sirius;

_I am starting to get worried about you, child. You haven't written since the first week of school and that was a rather heated discussion. It has been two months since then and I was really hoping I had raised you better than to keep a grudge like this. It's silly, and unbecoming behaviour for a boy of your stature. I really need you to think about the example you are setting for Regulus. He has been quite put out since you left. _

_Anyways, while I have been completely out of touch with you for the past two months, do not think that your father and I have in any way stopped keeping tabs on you. Your cousins write us nearly every week of your progress. Andromeda simply gushes about you, darling. She says you are doing very well in all your classes and that we have everything to be proud of. However, Narcissa's letters are much less becoming. The details of your social life have left me concerned about those you are associating yourself with. Now, I know because of your unfortunate living situation you have no choice but to coexist with some of Hogwarts riff-raff, but to actively befriend them? We are quite disappointed in you, Sirius. _

_Now the Potter boy, he is not so bad. His family's loyalties are questionable but his blood is pure and I am sure with some persuasion you could become key in changing some of the unfortunate teachings instilled in him by his parents. But these other two boys that

Narcissa has told me about are completely unacceptable. The Pettigrew boy is a halfblood far below your stature in both status and wealth. The Lupin one is even more abominable, his mother is actually a muggle, Sirius. I did not raise my boy to be hanging out with the likes of them._

I am ordering you to cut out this disastrous behavior at once and start acting like the Black you were born to be. If you refuse I can assure you this Christmas break will not be a pleasant one for any of us.

Sincerely,

Your loving mother,

Walburga Black

"Hmm, she sure does throw the term 'loving' around lightly, doesn't she.." James remarked when he finished reading it.

"I'll say," Remus muttered darkly. "Nice to know she's given each of us a background check."

Sirius glowered at the table. "Yeah, sorry about that. She's pretty full of it."

"I'm sure my parents are going to be thrilled Walburga Black's given them a performance review," James commented as he set the letter down and took a large bite out of Peter's pancake.

"Hey!"

"Sorry, mate. You took the last one."

"Close your mouth when you chew," Remus rolled his eyes. "No one wants to see that."

"You're just mad you didn't get a pancake."

"Well.. I would have rather liked one."

"Oi!" Sirius' three bickering friends turned to look at him. "That's it? You're not going to say anything else.. my mother just told me not to hang out with you lot anymore and all you three are talking about is breakfast?"

"Do you want us to have a heartfelt discussion?" Remus asked.

"No," Sirius shuddered at the thought.

"Are you going to ditch us?"

"No!" This he said with so much conviction multiple heads turned in their direction.

"Well, then," James began with a wideâ€"thankfully pancake-lessâ€"grin. "No offence, mate, but your mum's a bit of a prig and the 'riff-raff' here are trying to have a good morning."

"Plus," Peter interjected. "They were _really _good pancakes."

"I wouldn't know," Remus muttered and poked his fruit sadly with a fork.

Sirius shook his head slowly in disbelief—a grin spreading from ear to ear—and took a bite of his bacon. He chewed thoughtfully for a second before saying; "You lot are rubbish mates, next time save me a pancake, yeah?"

"Oh so that's why you showed us the letter.. you're lookin' for pity."

"Didn't work seeing as you lot still ate all the pancakes."

"'Course we did. We're rubbish mates."

That started an entire new round of bickering and the four Gryffindors continued on like that for the rest of breakfast. Sirius nearly forgot about the letter from home, he only glanced over towards the Slytherin table once to decide—for the final time—that there was no way he would be having this good of a time sitting with the 'good' purebloods. Gryffindor was where he belonged and he wasn't going to let his family take that from him—not in a thousand years.

When breakfast began to draw to a close and the tables slowly started to empty, Sirius pushed away from the table with the rest of his friend's and made towards the Entrance Hall. He hadn't been planning on the letter leading to a confrontation but Sirius was rather impulsive and the moment he saw that tell tale head of silvery blonde hair—Sirius made a beeline straight towards her, leaving his friends in the dust.

"Hey!" he called. The willowy witch—adorned in black school robes that somehow looked more elegant on her than anyone else in the vicinity—seemed to hesitate for a moment but kept on moving. "Narcissa! Narcissa Black!" This without a doubt caught her attention and she stopped on the spot.

The moment Narcissa's famously blue eyes found her cousin, a sneer skewed her beautiful face. "Cousin," she said in a falsely sweet voice. "What can I do for you?" She took a step forwards and Sirius noticed she had an entire clique waiting for her in the background. Lucius Malfoy—a prefect badge pinned to his chest—was watching his girlfriend quite intently.

"You could stop writing my mother." Sirius drew himself up to his full height and set his jaw in a hard line. Narcissa—who still towered over him—let out a light laugh like the tinkling of fairy bells.

Evil fairy bells, Sirius thought.

"Now why would I do that?" She asked in a silky smooth voice. "I—unlike you, my dearest cousin—actually value my family and their opinions of me."

Sirius snorted. "Maybe if you valued their opinions a little less you wouldn't be stuck with a git like Malfoy."

"Careful," Narcissa gave him a bright and far too sweet smile. "I don't like the way you're talking to me, cousin." She sneered the last word. "If you keep it up I might be tempted to make life very difficult for you."

"I doubt you even know what a difficult life looks like, _Cissy._" Something about that sentence must have gotten to the elder Black because her once impassive face flickered with anger so Sirius continued down that road. "Oh your life is just so perfect isn't it? It must be so nice to have everything figure out, or better yet to be a complete doormat so everyone else can just figure everything out for you."

"Shut up, Sirius." Narcissa snarled. A pale hand appeared on her shoulder—Lucius Malfoy seemed to have sensed the change in tone and had made himself a more forthright presence.

"Something wrong, darling?" He asked with a pointed look at Sirius.

"Nothing." She sniffed in a dignified sort of way.

"Need your boyfriend to fight your battles for you, huh, Cissy? Why am I not surprised?"

Narcissa glared daggers at her younger cousin. "He's not worth it, Lucius," she said after a moment and stormed away. "Come on."

"Yes, go on, " Sirius coaxed. "Better run back home to mummy and daddy where their wealth can protect you."

"Careful," Lucius warned. "If you keep down this road, Black, you won't like where you end up. And then trust me, even mummy and daddy's money won't be enough to protect you when you get where you're going. Not like they would help a filthy little bloodtraitor like you. Not even Regulus is going to be able to stand the sight of you when he sees what you've turned into.. how will that feel when even your own brother can't stand to look at you?"

"SHUT UP!" Sirius roared, he didn't even realize he had gotten his wand out until a hand closed around his wrist.

"Picking on first years, Malfoy, why am I not surprised?" Andromeda Black had appeared from seemingly nowhere and was visibly restraining her young cousin.

"He started it with your sister.. you do remember her, don't you?" Lucius sneered but Andromeda was unfazed.

"Get out of here, Malfoy before I get the urge to start handing out punishments. I don't care how awkward it makes the next family dinner. Narcissa is my sister and Sirius is my cousin—you are not even my brother-in-law so I will deal with them as I please." Her eyes flashed in a shocking resemblance to the last Black sister, Bellatrix. "Now leave."

He obeyed.

It wasn't until Lucius Malfoy was out of sight that Andromeda

released her grip on her cousin's arm. "Wand away, little one," she said. "I really don't want to be giving you any detentions, you hear me?"

He nodded but didn't speak.

"Rememberâ€"chin up." Andromeda gave him an empathetic pat on the back. "Now move along to your classes and no more trouble."

Sirius nodded slowly although his grey eyes shown furiously in the light. He turned away from his cousin and headed back towards the Gryffindor dorm. Sirius had only just begun to walk up the stairs when James appeared from the corridor and bounded down the stairsâ€"two steps at a timeâ€"towards him.

"Hey!" James grinned a very cheerful, cheeky, self assured and entirely James-like grin. "Where'd you go? I was halfway to Charms when I realized you were gone." His cheeky grin faltered when he caught the look on his friends face. "What happened to you?"

"Nothing." Sirius stuffed his hands into the pockets of his robes and walked up the stairs with a dark look on his face.

"C'mon, mateâ€"don't lie. Was it that Mulciber git, or Avery? Snivellus?"

"No," Sirius paused and chewed thoughtfully on the inside of his cheek. "I just had a chat with my cousin-_s._"

"Oh," James seemed to understand. "Gideon and Fabian say Narcissa's a stuck up prig." This he added as some sort of comfort.

Sirius was barely listening to the other boy. "She is," he agreed absently.

"Well..." James scrunched his nose up thoughtfully. "Whatever she did to put you in such a bad mood. Why don't we get back at her?"

Now that got Sirius' attention.

-x-

"I don't like this idea..." Remus began for about the third time that evening. "We could be in a lot of trouble if we're caught outside the common room this late."

"Oh we definitely would beâ€"but we won't get caught," James assured him with a crooked grin.

"How do you know that?" Peterâ€"who was trailing a few feet behind themâ€"asked.

"Because Hagrid's on patrols tonight."

"So?"

"So you can hear the guy coming from a kilometer away. _And _he never bothers keeping an eye on this staircase," Sirius interrupted. "It's not like the Hufflepuffs are going to be sneaking out for some late

night mischief anyways. But you knowâ€"keep talking, I'm sure there's got to be at least one or two portraits you two haven't woken up with your questions."

Remus rolled his eyes but nevertheless shut his mouth and followed his friends into the basement. There they stopped at a painting of a bowl of fruit.

"Want to do the honours, Pete?" James offered.

Eagerly, Peter reached forwards and lightly ticked the green pear which let out a rather high pitched squeal before transforming into a doorknob. Peter grasped the handle with a pudgy hand and pushed open the door. The four young wizards stepped inside the kitchens which were looking far different than the last time they had been there. Thanks to the late hourâ€"all of the houselves were out cleaning the castle as the majority of its inhabitants slept. They worked like clockworkâ€"Gideon had explainedâ€"and every evening there was a perfect half hour window for trouble-making.

"_Lumos." _Remus whispered and the dark kitchens were lit up with the light of his wand. "We better be quick about this then."

"That's the plan," James brushed past him and towards the long wooden table with an ornate 'S' carved into it. With wide, mischievous grin, James ran his hand over the ornate pumpkins placed on the table. Every one of them was filled to the brim with delectable treatsâ€"various puddings and pies includedâ€"although they couldn't be seen from the outside. "Got the other pumpkins, mate?" He turned around and addressed Sirius.

"Pumpkins and the potion." The dark haired wizard flashed him a wicked grin. "Think fast," he tossed a considerably small bagâ€"fit with an extendable charmâ€"towards James who caught it easily with wickedly fast reflexes.

"Nice," Peter whistled.

James grinned. "I reckon I was a cat in a prior life."

"Oh you were something alright.." Remus remarked sarcastically.

"Bugger off." James replied although he seemed quite unperturbed and he stuffed his arm elbow deep into the bag. He pulled out first a decorative pumpkin from the Great Hall and then a suspicious looking black vial they had stolen from the potions cupboard. "Ready to have some fun, boys?"

-x-

Hogwarts' famed Halloween feast was without a doubt one of the most anticipated events of the school year by both staff and students. Not only was it a time when the houselves went all out for both decoration and food but it also had the added bonus of being the first celebratory feast of the year and one of the few where the entire student population was present. Being the first feast of the year, it was also the first time that new students got to experience the majesty of holidays at Hogwartsâ€"and it never disappointed.

"Blimey," Peter marveled the moment the Great Hall doors swung open and Gryffindor house began to flood into the hall. "This really is something, huh?"

Privately, Sirius couldn't help agree—"holidays at the Black house were never this cheery and always stiflingly formal. But Hogwarts—"Hogwarts was something else entirely. The entire hall had been transformed and was draped in festive orange and black. The bewitched ceiling portrayed a thunderous sky above complete with a blaring full moon and live bats flying around above. An assortment of candles and pumpkins hung from the ceiling—"swaying from time to time with the passing of ghosts. Even the tables were lined with orange and black napkins complete with an ornate, stuffed pumpkin every few feet—"the very same pumpkins that had been in the kitchens the night before.

James grinned broadly. While Hogwarts Halloween was a sight to behold—"every Halloween in James' life had been magnificent. The only thing this one was missing was Remus who had left for home that morning. "I almost feel guilty for ruining the decorations," he stated mischievously. "_Almost._" He stressed the key word and sent a wink and a thumbs up Sirius' way.

"I still don't understand why we have to wait till the end of the feast," Peter sighed. "Couldn't we just do it now?"

"We want to ruin their Halloween—" Sirius sent a pointed look towards the Slytherin's table. "Not ours."

"Who's ruining who's Halloween?" asked a female voice. The boys looked up from talking among themselves as Marlene Mckinnon, followed by Vienna Dearborn slid onto the bench across from them.

"Oh nothing." James said convincingly enough, his grin however gave something away.

Marlene's eyes narrowed a fraction of an inch. "That's not your nothing look."

Peter opened his mouth eagerly to say something but Sirius gave him a sharp kick to the shin. "You'll find out soon enough, Mckinnon," Sirius responded enigmatically and the three boys refused to give anything else up for the duration of the feast.

As the feast began to draw to a close, Sirius found himself becoming more and more restless. Despite the large amounts of delicious food in front of him, Sirius had a hard time pretending he was enjoying the last few morsels instead of counting down the clock until dessert. He began to glance towards the Slytherin table every couple minutes where he could see Narcissa sitting in lavish dress robes besides Lucius Malfoy and the rest of their clique. Down the table from them, he could see Severus Snape and a few other first year Slytherin's he vaguely recognized—"Rosier, Mulciber, Avery—"along with a red haired girl whose face he couldn't quite make out.

"Say—"where's your other roommate?" Sirius asked suddenly, directing the question towards Marlene and Vienna.

"Which one?" Vienna asked mildly. From the eight weeks Sirius had spent in the same house with her he was getting the distinct impression the only girl in her dormitory she thought was of any consequence was Marlene. He wasn't sure if it had to do with the fact that the two were both purebloods and from relatively respected familiesâ€"they were certainly no Blacks or Pottersâ€"but his current theory was based more on personality. They seemed to be the only two girls of their year who weren't reserved and well behavedâ€"save for Mary McDonald who Sirius just deemed an annoyance.

"You know, the ginger."

"Evans?" Marlene asked. She glanced around the table and shrugged.
"No idea, why?"

Sirius shrugged. "No reason." He did his own quick sweep of the tableâ€"all the other Gryffindor first years were present except for her. A few seats over from them Adam Fawley sat with Terry McMillan and Mary McDonald whose blonde curls bounced enthusiastically every few seconds. Even farther down, Septima Vector sat with a witch who had dishwater blonde hair, oversized front teeth and glasses too big for her headâ€"Katie Turner.

Lily Evans was nowhere in sight.

"James.. I think we may have a problem." Sirius muttered.

"Schmvt?" James asked through a mouthful of food. Sirius raised his eyebrows and the messy haired boy swallowed his food in one gulp.
"What?" he asked again.

"See that redhead over there," Sirius nodded towards the Slytherin table where said redhead was laughing with Severus Snapeâ€"or at least she was laughing and he seemed to be less grumpy than usual. "I think that's Evans."

James eyes widened an inch. "Uh-oh." He shifted to get a better look.
"Should we-"

"Nah," Sirius lowered his voice. "We can't stop a brilliant prank just for one lousy Gryffindor." He took a bite of his sausage and raised his voice back up to a normal volume. "Besidesâ€"she'll never know it was us."

"Never know what was you?" Vienna Dearborn asked. Sirius thought about explaining the whole ordeal for a momentâ€"just to brag about the genius of the thingâ€"but at that moment all the dinner plates and cutlery vanished. Sirius twisted in his seat to get a good look at the Slytherin table because he knew in seconds he was about to see one of the best sights of his life.

"You're about to see." James grinned. Vienna and Marlene exchanged confused yet somewhat intrigued glances with each other.

At that moment the pumpkins lining each of the four tables explodedâ€"some students shrieked as their contents were strewn across the table and they were pelted with various candies and sweets. The hysteria calmed quickly when they realized what was being thrown at them and students began to laugh and grab for their dessert. At the high table, the teachers began to clap

appreciativelyâ€"until a loud shriek broke through the hall.

Narcissa Black stood up from the Slytherin tableâ€"covered almost completely in slimy, orange, pumpkin insides. "What the _hell_?" she screeched. As the pumpkin began to slide off of her it revealed her once perfect, fair, skin was bubbling rather unpleasantly and quickly forming boils on every exposed surface. There was a breath moment of silence that reverberated through the Great Hall as the student body sat in stunned shock and then all hell broke loose.

All across the Slytherin table the same scene was being repeated over and over again as everyone who had been touched by the pumpkin goo began to break out in boils and promptly ran out of the hall. The other three tables were a mixture of interested buzzing, worried looks andâ€"for the most part in Gryffindor's caseâ€"unabridged laughter.

Sirius Black himself let out a bark of laughter so loud at his cousin's run from the Great Hall that he toppled backwards off his chair and fell to the floor. James yanked him up by the scruff of his shirtâ€"his own face filled with undeniable mirth as nearly every Gryffindor at the table howled with laughter.

"Well, mate, I'd call that a job well done. Wouldn't you?"

"Absolutely." Sirius Black agreed with perhaps the most sincere grin he'd ever had.

* * *

><p>AN: **So first new chapter in two years and I'm pretty sure the style of this story has changed completely. But I absolutely loved writing this chapter so I hope you all enjoyed it. I'm finding it challenging to write eleven/twelve year-oldsâ€"it's so different from the type of people I usually write so let me know what you think of them. I'm almost a 100% sure I'm writing them to old for their age group but I want to make this story enjoyable for an older audience so that's bound to happen. Also I realize Remus is quiet shy and a bit of a goodygoody (although he does get some good lines in) but that's just how I imagine him as a first year. He'll grow out of it of course. By the end of this story none of the characters will be the same as they were in the beginning (some more than others). An interesting tidbit about this chapter is it's word count is more than the other three's combined. I guess that also shows how my writing's changed.

If anyone's confused about the details of the prank, do not despair, all will be explained in the next chapter which will also have lots of Lily in it!

Reviews are me not failing my History midterm. (So please review because I am _screwed_)

xx Audrey.

End
file.